



State of Wisconsin  
Department of Public Instruction  
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

\*\*\* NEWS RELEASE \*\*\*

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## Burmaster recognizes 2008 Friends of Education

MADISON—State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster recognized 10 individuals and one association for the contributions they make to public education in Wisconsin. Burmaster presented her 2008 Friends of Education awards during her state of education address Thursday at the Capitol.

“These Friends of Education are devoted to education, community, and opportunity. They understand that the long-term economic security and quality of life for Wisconsin and our nation depends on how we educate today’s elementary and secondary students,” she said.

Burmaster presented awards to

**Judge Carl Ashley** of Milwaukee, who coordinates the Connecting Courtrooms and Classrooms Project, a partnership of the Milwaukee Public Schools and the Milwaukee County Court System. Ashley is a frequent visitor to schools, encouraging students to set goals, be persistent, and work hard to overcome barriers to achieving those goals. He serves as a member of the Accountability and Support Group, which provides support to and holds Milwaukee Public Schools accountable for achieving results. Accepting the award on the judge’s behalf was his brother, John Ashley, executive director of the Wisconsin Association of School Boards.

**Mark Cullen**, chairman of J.P. Cullen and Sons, headquartered in Janesville, for his leadership in education. He helped convene the Business Summit on 21st Century Skills, which brought together more than 200 business leaders to discuss what schools need to do to prepare students to compete in the global economy. Cullen, whose construction company has built elementary, secondary, and postsecondary facilities throughout the state, serves on a statewide leadership team working to ensure the rigor and relevance of Wisconsin’s high school standards in English language arts and mathematics. He also contributed financial support for the Partnership for 21st Century Skills national conference in Wisconsin last June.

**Pastor Bill Farr** of Crandon, for his humanitarian spirit and support in the aftermath of the tragic Oct. 7, 2007, slaying of six young people in Crandon. Farr’s Praise Chapel Community Church became an informal counseling center as townspeople grieved their loss. Faith leaders from multiple denominations ministered to more than 200 children and adults who sought help at Farr’s church. Additionally, in his nearly 19 years as a pastor, Farr and his family have developed many local ties and worked to support the Crandon School District.

**Genevieve Goslin** of Bayfield, for her lifelong commitment to education and the children of her community. Goslin is a role model for the lifelong pursuit of education. She started her schooling in the 1920s, completed her GED and an associate’s degree in the 1980s, and earned a bachelor’s degree at the age of 74. Known as Grandma Genny, the tribal elder of the Red Cliff Band of the Lake Superior Anishinaabeg is a foster

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grandmother at the Red Cliff Early Childhood Center, volunteer at Holy Family Catholic School, and teacher at both the Bayfield Public Schools and Lac Courte Oreilles Community College.

**State Representative Barbara “Bobby” Gronemus** of Whitehall, for her advocacy for students, especially for Career and Technical Education Student Organizations. Gronemus has been elected to the state assembly since 1982. She was unable to attend the Friends of Education recognition ceremony.

**Margaret Henningsen** of Milwaukee, for her dedication to the developmental, social, and financial well being of Milwaukee citizens. Henningsen is the founder of Legacy Bank in the heart of Milwaukee, which provides comprehensive banking services to the underserved. Henningsen includes financial literacy as a key component of her efforts. Additionally, Henningsen founded Milwaukee’s annual Juneteenth celebration; oversaw a multi-million dollar early childhood development program that educated more than 10,000 children and provided support for their families; worked as a licensed real estate broker, helping more than 300 low-income women become homeowners; and has volunteered her service to more than 30 boards, commissions, and blue ribbon panels in the Milwaukee community.

**Mary Henry** of Beloit, for her 13 years of service to the Preschool to Grade 5 Advisory Council. The P-5 program addresses the educational needs of economically disadvantaged students, working to close the achievement gap. Additionally, Henry has been an advocate for developing school and community partnerships; is president of the Minority Parent Organization, which awards scholarships to deserving students; and is a member of the Education and Learning Center Ministries at her church, which mentors youth and supports their school success. She also is president of the Stateline Golden K Kiwanis Club, which works to improve the Beloit community.

**May See Her** of Wausau, for serving as a positive role model and educational inspiration. Her, who pioneered undergraduate and graduate college attendance, is chair of the Hmong Organization for the Promise of Enrichment (HOPE), a group of Wausau area women who raise funds for scholarships. The HOPE scholarship fund has raised nearly \$10,000 for scholarships for Hmong women who are continuing their education beyond high school. Additionally, Her works as a social worker with Marathon County Social Services, assisting youth in the foster care system and urging young people to stay in high school and pursue further education.

**Lucia Nuñez** of Madison, for her lifelong dedication to equal rights and opportunities. Nuñez is the first Director of the City of Madison Department of Civil Rights. Formerly, as executive director of Centro Hispano of Dane County, Nuñez was instrumental in working with school districts, United Way agencies, and the business community to raise awareness and build support for the growing Latino population. At the state level in the Department of Workforce Development, Nuñez promoted the department’s educational programs throughout the state, emphasizing the strong link between higher paying jobs and training opportunities. In addition, Nuñez was a teacher, served in the Peace Corps in Honduras, and has published material for educators on international and cross-cultural education.

**Congressman Dave Obey** of Wausau, for his lifelong work on behalf of the citizens of Wisconsin and his strong support for education. Obey was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in an April 1969 special election, representing Wisconsin’s 7th Congressional District. He chairs the Committee on Appropriation, which makes funding decisions on every discretionary program in the federal budget, including Pell grants, No Child Left Behind, special education, and Head Start. Obey also chairs the Education Appropriations Subcommittee, which funds student assistance, after school centers, and childhood development programs. In addition, during his three full terms in the Wisconsin State Assembly, Obey played a key role in creating Wisconsin’s system of technical college districts. Obey was unable to attend the Friends of Education recognition ceremony.

The **Wisconsin Professional Police Association**, located in Madison and represented by Jim Palmer, executive director, for the group’s Law Enforcement Torch Run for Special Olympics Wisconsin. Each year, hundreds of law enforcement officers across Wisconsin escort the Olympic Torch to the Special Olympics Wisconsin opening ceremonies in Stevens Point. The association promotes and supports the mission of the Special Olympics and encourages its almost 400 local association affiliates to help raise funds and awareness of the games’ importance for the 10,000 athletes who participate in Special Olympics Wisconsin.

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**NOTE:** This news release and a photo gallery of the awards program are available electronically at [http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008\\_137.pdf](http://dpi.wi.gov/eis/pdf/dpi2008_137.pdf) and <http://dpi.wi.gov/sprntdnt/photos.html>. Wisconsin Eye recorded the Friends of Education awards presentation, viewable at <http://www.wiseye.org/>.